



TOWN OF WEST HARTFORD

Minutes

Substance Abuse Prevention Commission

December 14, 2017 5:00-6:30pm

Town Hall, Room 400

1. Roll Call

Present: Nordia Napier, Chastity Rodriguez, Jean Schensul, Jonathan Merritt, Kim Ambroise, Nicole Edlund, Alysha Williams, Joseph Kalache, Lorna Thomas-Farquharson, Amanda Martin, Emily Melnick, Lillian Oliveira, Mitch Irving, Rachel Tenney, John Mancini

Absent: David Eppner, Amal Ali, Benjamin Grippo, Anastasia Khrenova, Helen Drohan

2. Approval of Minutes

Chair Chastity Rodriguez moved and Coordinator Jonathan Merritt seconded to approve the Substance Abuse Prevention Commission (SAPC) minutes on 11/9/17 and 11/16/17. Approved, 6-0.

3. Nominations/Announcements

Lorna Thomas-Farquharson, West Hartford Board of Education representative, will be nominated for appointment on 1/9/18 by town council to replace Dave Pauluk. Amanda Martin, West Hartford Police Department representative, will be nominated for appointment on 1/9/18 by town council to replace Leo Negron. Jaclyn Dulude has submitted her letter of resignation to the commission.

4. Unfinished Business

- a. Discussion and clarification of the relationship between State of Connecticut Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services (DMHAS) and SAPC

1. Mitch Irving and Jean Schensul: Purpose of DMHAS funding is to support SAPC in creating projects to support prevention; SAPC should implement and develop subcommittees to support community prevention;

SAPC should take on the work of DMHAS as its prevention organization for West Hartford

2. Joseph Kalache: there needs to be clarification on whether or not SAPC is able to make those decisions and recommendations; outlined in the mission of SAPC is that SAPC goal is to advise town council.

3. Chair Chastity Rodriguez moved and Jonathan Merritt seconded to formally recommend to town council that SAPC have the authority to create and develop projects as a coalition supported by DMHAS.

Approved 6-0 (6 in favor: Nordia Napier, Jonathan Merritt, Chastity Rodriguez, Jean Schensul, Nicole Edlund, Kim Ambrose; 1 abstain: Alysha Williams)

5. New Business

a. Emily Melnick: Institute for Community Research (ICR) will be assessing the attributes of the coalition; what makes a healthy/viable coalition? Is leadership where it needs to be? ICR will be giving a baseline assessment first; will submit assessment to Jonathan Merritt to distribute to appointed SAPC members.

b. Discussion and review of former subcommittees: formerly had 3 subcommittees (Youth, Adults, and Older Adults); SAPC would like to have a total of 5 subcommittees (1. Youth, 2. Adults/Parents/Caregivers, 3. Older Adults, 4. SAPC Bylaw Review, and 5. Data); Joe Kalache discussed the possibility of revising SAPC bylaws: make up of commission is too stringent and outdated (hope works); membership needs to be trimmed down; become action oriented as opposed to solely advising

c. Broke off into 2 subcommittee groups

1. **Youth subcommittee** (Jonathan Merritt, Alysha Williams, Lillian Oliveira, Mitch Irving, Lorna Thomas-Farquharson, Amanda Martin, Nordia Napier) – Alysha Williams and Lillian Oliveira will coordinate this subcommittee; discussed the following: no more speakers for youth in schools, or to have a different format; student run and lead activities or speakers; have one room where students can visit during the day; new plans for fundraisers (“night at Pepe’s”); providing substance free spaces for teens in town; 2 parties during the year, hosted by the West Hartford Teen Center, sponsored by ICR, and similar to “Safe Grad” that need to be planned; open teen center to

middle school youth on Tuesdays and Thursdays; middle school night run by Teen Center Leadership Group; transportation to teen center from Conard and Hall;

2. **Adult subcommittee** (Chastity Rodriguez, Jean Schensul, Nicole Edlund, Joseph Kalache, Emily Melnick, Rachel Tenney); discussed the following: #letstalkweha (Rachel Tenney) campaign to get parents to talk to their kids about addiction; celebrate west Hartford booth to give out surveys; PSAs on town tv or website; small groups of parents to encourage discussions with small groups of youth; young adults and self-medicating; parents want to keep kids so busy to make sure they aren't getting into trouble, but this leads to anxiety and mental health issues

6. **Next Steps:** Review progress on how to advise town council, and what recommendations can be made; if the commission is not ready by January, we will postpone formal recommendations; review SAPC bylaws; nominate Rachel Tenney for next meeting.

7. **Adjournment**

Chair Chastity Rodriguez moved and Jonathan Merritt seconded to adjourn the meeting at 6:32pm. Approved (6-0).

The meeting adjourned at 6:32 PM.
Respectfully submitted,
Jonathan Merritt
December 15, 2017

